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**REASON & REVELATION**

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# THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

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# The Teleological Argument for the Existence of God

## [Part 1]

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Article In Brief... GOD

**One of the decisive proofs that the God of the Bible exists is the incredible design in the natural order. The Universe, the Earth, and all living things on the Earth manifest characteristics that demonstrate purposeful intention in their design variables. They constitute undeniable proof of a Supreme Designer Whose glory is declared by the work of His hands (Psalm 19:1).**

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a two-part series on the teleological argument for the existence of God. Part II will appear in the March issue.]

SEVERAL years ago, astronomers from more than 30 research institutions in 15 countries worked together to select a site for a giant telescope that they hoped would read TV or radio signals from alien civilizations. Slated to cost one billion dollars, the Square Kilometer Array, or SKA, would be the world's most powerful radio telescope. Speaking at a conference of the International Society for Optical Engineering in Orlando, Florida, project astronomers said they hoped to find "immediate and direct evidence of life elsewhere in the Universe."<sup>1</sup>

Despite this bold venture, the scientists admitted that "such a search would have distinct limitations, to be sure." "Distinct limitations"? Like

what? For one, the scientists "aren't sure how to recognize such signals, if they do turn up. The hope is that the signals would consist of **organized patterns suggestive of intelligence**, and not attributable to any known celestial sources."<sup>2</sup> Wait a minute. Evolutionary scientists are renowned for their condescending ridicule of creationists because those who believe in God assert that evidence of intelligent design in the Universe is proof of an Intelligent Designer. No, the evolutionists counter, the Universe got here by accident through random chance, mindless trial and error, and the blind, mechanistic forces of nature. They maintain that life on Earth owes its ultimate origin to dead, non-purposeful, unconscious, non-intelligent matter. Yet they were perfectly willing to squander one billion dollars on a telescope with the speculative idea that solid proof—hard evidence—for

the existence of alien life would reside in undecipherable radio or TV signals that convey "organized patterns suggestive of intelligence."<sup>3</sup> Atheistic evolutionists want it both ways: organized patterns prove the existence of intelligent alien design and organized patterns do not prove the existence of an Intelligent Designer. Philosophers and logicians refer to such duplicitous posturing as irrational and "logical contradiction." Apparently, evolutionists call it "science." Nevertheless, the basic thrust of the teleological argument for the existence of God is self-evident.

### THE UNIVERSE—A "WASTE OF SPACE"?

"THE cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be."<sup>4</sup> So began Carl Sagan's immensely popular book and PBS television series: *Cosmos*. A more atheistic, humanistic, materialistic declaration could not be spoken. Sagan (1934-1996), who was an astronomer at Cornell University who lived his entire life resistant to the possibility of God and an after-life, maintained his unbelief—in the words of his third wife—"unflinching" to the end.<sup>5</sup> She, herself, finds comfort after his passing "without resorting to the supernatural."<sup>6</sup>

When people reject or avoid the implications of the design in the created order—i.e., that it is logically the result of a Supreme Creator—they have inevitably "exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (Romans 1:25). Skeptical of the survival of the Earth at the mercy of *Homo sapiens*, Sagan turned his attention to an almost obsessive dedication to finding answers and solutions from life forms beyond Earth. In his own words: "In a very real sense this search for extraterrestrial

intelligence is a search for a cosmic context for mankind, a search for who we are, where we have come from, and what possibilities there are for our future—in a universe vaster both in extent and duration than our forefathers ever dreamed of.”<sup>7</sup>

Less than a year after his death, Hollywood released a movie on July 11, 1997 based on Sagan’s novel *Contact*.<sup>8</sup> The film’s central character, Dr. Eleanor Arroway (played by Jodie Foster), was surely the embodiment of the formative experiences, philosophical perspectives, and spiritual beliefs of Sagan himself. On three separate occasions in the film, a pseudo-intellectual remark, obviously designed to defend the naturalistic explanation of the existence of the Universe while ridiculing the Christian viewpoint, is offered up to viewers. As a child, “Ellie” asks her father if life exists out in the Universe, to which he responds: “Well, if there wasn’t, it’d be an awful waste of space.” As an adult, she converses with Palmer Joss (played by Matthew McConaughey), and, staring up at the starry Puerto Rican sky, expresses her confidence in the evolution of other life forms elsewhere in the Universe: “If just one in a million of those stars has planets, and if only one in a million of those has life, and if just one in a million of those has intelligent life, then there are millions of civilizations out there.”<sup>9</sup> Ellie is pleasantly stunned when Joss repeats the same line that her father uttered to her when she was a child. Near the close of the film, Ellie speaks the line again to a group of school children when asked if life exists in space.

This triple declaration was obviously intended to offer a “logical” proof that, rather than looking to some supernatural Being Who is transcendent of the Universe, humans had best

recognize that the only life beyond planet Earth are those life forms that have evolved (like our own) on other planets in far off galaxies. The materialist is forced to follow Sagan’s presupposition: life must exist elsewhere in the Universe since there is no God. If there is a God Who created life only on Earth, then He was guilty of poor teleological design—creating a vast physical realm that serves absolutely no purpose—and thus producing a nearly infinite realm of “wasted space.”

But wait! The Bible long ago anticipated the skepticism of the materialist astronomer. At the creation of the Universe, God said: “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth” (Genesis 1:14-15). The luminaries that God made included the stars: “God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night” (vss. 17-18). One very specific function of the stars that occupy space

far beyond our solar system is illumination (cf. Psalm 136:9). They are “light-bearers.”<sup>10</sup>

Another very specific purpose of the vastness of space is seen in the multiple declarations regarding the infinitude of God and the evidence that points to His existence, His glory, His eternity, and His power. Paul affirmed very confidently that “since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20). It is absolutely incredible—and, according to Paul, inexcusable—for a rational human being to contemplate the magnitude of the Universe and the vastness of space, and then to reject the only logical, plausible explanation for it all: God. We simply have no excuse for rejecting God when we are surrounded by such an overwhelming display of wonders and marvels in the created order. Indeed, atheism, evolution, and humanism are simply more sophisticated forms of the polytheism that has plagued humanity for millennia. Moses

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warned the Israelites of this very thing: “[T]ake heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage” (Deuteronomy 4:19). Evolutionary astronomy assigns an inflated value to the vastness of space by postulating that it can provide mankind with an alternative explanation for the existence of life—an explanation that absents God. Any such postulation ultimately amounts to idolatry.

David, too, paid homage to the glory of the Creator, as evidenced by the eloquent symphony of the majestic Universe that is played perpetually—24 hours a day:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat (Psalm 19:1-6; cf. 74:16-17; 136:7-8).

Separate and apart from the latest evidence that confirms the movement of the Sun through space,<sup>11</sup> these verses reaffirm the fact that the created Universe loudly announces the existence of the Universe-Maker. David also declared: “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, You have set Your glory above the heavens! ...When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars,

which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:1,3). God “stretched out the heavens like a curtain” (Psalm 104:2). No wonder even a philosopher on the order of Immanuel Kant observed: “Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.”<sup>12</sup>

A third biblical explanation for the creation of the vast Universe was hinted at by God Himself in the attitude-adjusting lecture He delivered to Job: “Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? Can you lead forth a constellation in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you fix their rule over the earth?” (Job 38:31-33). Notice the action terms that are used to refer to the movement of the constellations: bind, loose, lead forth, and guide. Observe also the “laws of the heavens” and their relationship to “ruling over the earth.”<sup>13</sup> These verses imply that the heavenly bodies, and the laws that govern them, have been deliberately orchestrated, modulated, and regulated by the Creator to serve a purpose or purposes far beyond our present understanding. The text seems to hint that Earth’s status, with its living beings, is somehow affected by the phenomena of the cosmic bodies. Even as the comprehension of scientists has been lacking through the centuries on many features of the physical realm, only eventually to discover the meaning that lay behind observable phenomena, even so our present comprehension of space is woefully inadequate to justify passing judgment on the intentionality

and teleology that lie behind many astronomical phenomena.

Evolutionists have far better arguments with which to attempt to prop up their atheistic stance (the “problem of evil” being the strongest, though refutable<sup>14</sup>). The “wasted space” argument is anemic, pitiful, and hardly worthy of rebuttal. However, since they brought it to our attention, the Christian is once again reminded of the unfathomable attributes of the great God Who stands above and beyond this vast physical realm. The immensity and vastness of the Universe only spurs the rational mind to marvel at the One whose own metaphysical transcendence surpasses the visible. In the words of the psalmist: “I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works. Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, and I will declare Your greatness” (145:5-6). “He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite” (Psalm 147:4-5). Isaiah agreed: “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power” (40:26). Indeed, “the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ‘You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created’” (Revelation 4:10-11). The vast cosmos points directly and unmistakably to an awesome God.

## THE REVELATION OF GOD

**Y**OU see, the infinite God of the Bible has revealed Himself to the

human race by means of two forms of revelation: natural (or generic) and supernatural (or special). Special revelation consists of the Bible—the self-authenticating, supernatural book that God imparted to humanity by miraculously directing human writers to record His will (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

Natural revelation consists of nature: the material realm, the created order. Since God created the heavens and the Earth, His “fingerprints” are all over it. Humans can easily recognize these fingerprints—if they are unbiased, honest, and willing to follow the evidence to its logical conclusion.

Sadly, the number of those who reject the obvious is legion. Why? They are generally unwilling to accept the implications of the existence of God: the need to bring one’s fleshly appetites and actions into harmony with the will of the Creator. But that fact does not lessen the magnitude of the evidence and its availability. Indeed, the psalmist said there is no language where the evidence for God is unavailable (Psalm 19:1-2).

### TELEOLOGY

**T**HE word “teleology” comes from the Greek term *teleios*, meaning “complete, perfect,” taken from *telos* which means “end,” “outcome, result.”<sup>15</sup> The teleological argument maintains that one proof for God’s existence is the fact that the Universe is the result or outcome of intentional design, order, and purpose. The characteristics of design in the Universe demonstrate the existence of a Designer. In addition to the passages given previously, the Bible also articulates this principle when the Hebrews writer stated this rationale succinctly in Hebrews 3:4—“For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.” If houses with

their sophisticated designs cannot just happen or evolve over millions of years, how could worlds? If a watch cannot occur by chance, neither can the systematic chronometers of the Universe. Their geometric precision is so superior to human invention that eclipses, planetary movements, and other astronomical phenomena can be predicted centuries in advance. The Universe is literally a finely tuned, organized machine. If we readily recognize that intelligent planning is behind all ordered design, how could nature’s intricate networks have no Planner? To observe the fantastic design in nature and then conclude there is no Supreme Designer is to behave irrationally. The evidence that surrounds us in the material Universe demands the conclusion that God exists.

### DECISIVE EVIDENCE

**D**O cars just happen? Of course not. Their multiple systems are interactive and integrated with each other in order for the automobile to operate. A mind—no, multiple minds—lie behind the creation of a car. Yet, compared to the Universe, or compared to the human body, or even compared to the inner workings of one tree leaf, a car is a crude and primitive invention. If the creation of a car demands the existence of the remarkable human brain/mind, what must be required for the creation of the human brain/mind? Obviously, something or Someone far superior to the human mind would be needed for its creation. Logically, that Someone must be the powerful, transcendent Creator: the God of the Bible.

The naturalistic explanation given by evolutionists for the existence of the created order cannot meet the dictates of logic that characterize the unencumbered, unprejudiced human

mind. The more one investigates the intricacies and complexities of the natural realm, the more self-evident it is that a grand and great Designer is responsible for the existence of the Universe. In fact, the evidence is overwhelming and decisive.

### The Human Body<sup>16</sup>

Take, for example, the human body, which possesses such complexity that it simply could not have evolved. Its amazing intricacies absolutely demand a mind—a higher intelligence—behind them. The development of the camera was based upon the human eye. Yet, for all we have accomplished with video and sophisticated photographic equipment, the living, full color optical system of the human eye is unsurpassed. What’s more, we possess a self-restoring, self-repairing healing system; a sensitive stereophonic auditory system; tireless muscular-connecting tissue systems; a well-engineered skeletal framework; a computerized memory-bank brain; a ventilation-insulation skin envelope which constitutes an efficient cooling system of 2000 pores per square inch of skin; and a cardiovascular system that constantly oxygenates our blood with every breath. The human body is absolute proof of God. Atheism cannot explain it. Evolution cannot logically account for it. Scientists have yet to fully understand it. Multiple lifetimes would be necessary even to begin to grasp the massive amount of evidence inherent in the human body.

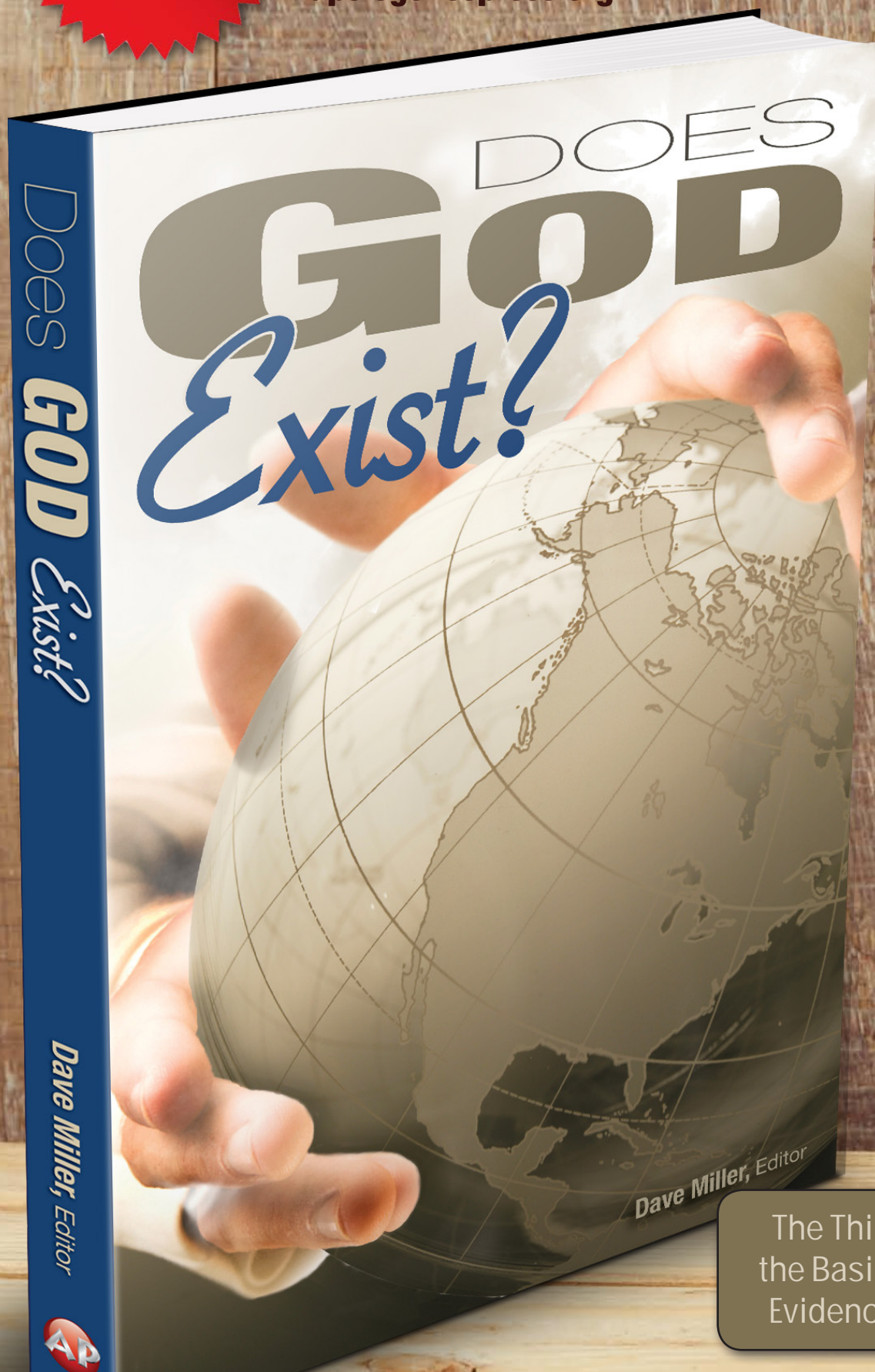
The psalmist also stated, “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well” (Psalm 139:14). Indeed, the human body itself is sufficient proof of the existence of the Divine Creator. Right now, your body is performing amazing feats of

(cont. on p. 20)



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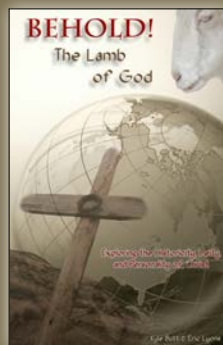


# GOD DOES *Exist?*

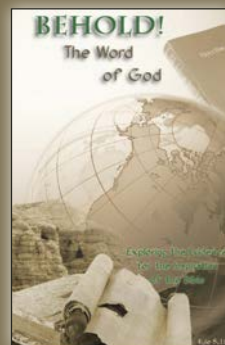
Exploring the Evidence for  
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Does evidence exist by which we can arrive at a knowledge of the existence of the God of the Bible? Absolutely! And given the available evidence, faith is reasonable. That is why the psalmist declared: "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14:1). We must think rationally and go where the evidence leads. Will you give consideration to but a small portion of the voluminous evidence that points unmistakably to the existence of God?

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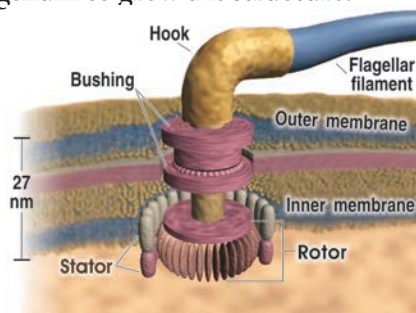
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engineering, chemistry, and physics that no machine designed by man can duplicate. Great human minds have applied themselves to the task of duplicating the various capabilities of the human body. Some incredible things have been accomplished in their efforts to copy God's Creation, but they simply cannot compare with the marvel of God's design.

### The Flagellum<sup>17</sup>

Consider yet another among the millions of amazing proofs of the reality of the Creator. Bacteria, like salmonella, have as part of their anatomy several flagella filaments extending from their cell body. These flagella are marvels of engineering—bio-nano-machines—that appear to possess the remarkable ability of self-assembly. The bacterium's flagellum assembly process begins with the formation of an MS ring in the cytoplasmic membrane. Then a switch complex called a "C" ring is assembled on its cytoplasmic side, followed by integration of the protein export apparatus inside the ring. The export apparatus sends out flagellar proteins from the cell body to the distal end of the flagellum to grow the structure.



Next, the "hook," working as an efficient universal joint, extends to the outside of the cell. Then two junction proteins, Hap<sup>1</sup> and Hap<sup>3</sup>, are attached, followed by the binding of the cap protein, Hap<sup>2</sup>, to form a capping structure under which the assembly of flagellum molecules begins to grow the flagellar filament.

Flagellum molecules are then inserted successively just below the cap, and the flagellar filament continues to grow. All of the flagellar axial proteins produced in the cell body are sent into the central channel of the flagellum and transported to and polymerized at its growing end. Some 20 to 30,000 flagellum molecules polymerize to construct a 10 to 15 micrometer long filament.

The flagellar motor is similar to manmade motors—since both were built on fundamental principles set in place by the Creator. The flagellum consists of rotor and stator units in the cell membrane, including switching unit, bushing, universal joint, and helical screw propeller. To generate thrust, the rotary motor is driven by protons flowing into the cell body. The motor then drives the rotation of the flagellum at around 300 Hz, at a power level of  $10^{-16}$  W, with energy conversion efficiency close to 100%. The resulting speed is up to 20,000 rpms—faster than the speed of Formula 1 race car engines. This highly efficient, flagellar motor is far beyond the capabilities of manmade, artificial motors. It is so sophisticated, that to suggest that it evolved is the height of irrationality and blind prejudice. Indeed, the evidence is decisive: there is a Designer.

### The Pine Tree<sup>18</sup>

Consider the pine tree. Some 120 species and subspecies of the pine tree exist worldwide. The Ponderosa pine tree (*pinus ponderosa*) is one of America's abundant tree species, covering approximately 27 million acres of land. A young Ponderosa pine has brownish-black bark that changes to a distinctive orange-brown color as the tree grows older. The bark is segmented into large, plate-like structures whose appearance has

been likened to a jigsaw puzzle. This unusual design has a purpose. If the tree catches fire, these plates pop off as the bark burns. The tree, in effect, sheds its burning bark! This design, along with the great thickness of the bark, allows the tree to be very resistant to low intensity fires. Since design demands a designer, Who is responsible for this intricate design?

Another species of pine tree is the Lodgepole Pine (*pinus contorta*), so named since Native Americans used Lodgepole pine for the "lodge poles" in their teepees. This amazing pine tree grows cones that are slightly smaller than a golf ball, are tan when fresh, but turn gray with age. These serotinous cones remain closed until the heat of a forest fire prompts them to open. After the fire, the cones open and reseed the forest. The species literally regenerates itself—even though the forest fire kills the tree itself. Since such design demands a designer, Who is responsible for this ingenious design?

Yet another species of pine tree is the Whitebark Pine (*pinus albicaulis*). This tree possesses a symbiotic relationship with a bird species known as the Clark's Nutcracker. The tree is dependent on this bird for reproduction, while the seed of the tree is a major source of food for the bird. This mutualistic relationship is further seen in the fact that Whitebark pinecones do not open and cast seed when they are ripe. The cones remain closed until the Nutcracker comes along, pries the cone open with its bill, and stores the seed within a pouch beneath its tongue. The bird then caches the seed to be used later as a food supply. Some of these seed caches are forgotten, or are not needed, thus enabling the tree to reproduce. Such amazing design—with no Mind behind it? Illogical!



### Seed: The Dandelion, *Tipuana tipu*, and the *Alsomitra macrocarpa*<sup>19</sup>

When the Creator created the Universe in six literal days, He created seed on the third day:

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day (Genesis 1:11-13).

God designed three main mechanisms for seed dispersal: (1) via animals (e.g., a bird eating a piece of fruit containing seed, and flying to another location where the seed passes out of its body), (2) drifting in ocean and fresh water, and (3) floating with the wind. Incredibly, each of these mechanisms points to the orchestration of a Mastermind.

Consider the ordinary dandelion. It possesses a magnificent crown of plumose hairs forming a symmetrical sphere. Upon closer investigation, this sphere is composed of numerous shafts, each equipped with its own umbrella-like canopy of intricately branched hairs. At the base of each shaft is a single seed. Each individual shaft with its canopy and single seed closely resemble the same design as that utilized in parachutes.



As breezes blow across the surface of the dandelion, the canopy of hairs

catch the wind which tugs at the shaft with its host of attached seeds, gently pulling them free from the dandelion head. The parachute-like canopy of hairs then allows the entire assembly to drift with the wind. In fact, the canopy of hairs is precisely designed to achieve flight. The length of the shaft is just right to enable aerodynamic positioning of the canopy to enable it to come to a landing in another location. The attached seed can then take root and start the process all over again. The dandelion is absolute, undeniable proof of God.

Then there is the *Tipuana tipu* tree (also called Rosewood), originally from South America, but now planted as a shade tree throughout the world. This tree produces achenes—a type of fruit consisting of a dry, membranous sheath that surrounds a seed. The *tipu* tree has a unique type of achene called a samara, which facilitates a specialized form of wind dispersal. It possesses a fan-shaped wing with a slight pitch (like a propeller or fan blade) which causes it to spin like the auto-rotation of helicopter blades when it falls. The spinning creates lift that slows descent, giving more opportunity to be carried a substantial distance from the tree by the wind, depending on wind velocity and distance above the ground. The decomposed seed spirals down to the ground to become established and perpetuate the species—an unmistakable example of flawless aerodynamic wing design.

Also known for its ingenious aerodynamic configuration is the seed of a tenacious tropical climbing vine identified as *Alsomitra macrocarpa*. Also called the *Javan cucumber*, it hangs from trees high in the rain forest canopy in the Sunda Islands of the Malay Archipelago and the Indonesian islands. Each football-sized fruit/

gourd is densely packed with large numbers of winged “Stealth Bomber” seeds. A single seed is enveloped by two transparent, papery wings, about five inches across, angled slightly back from and extending either side of the seed. Upon ripening, the wings become dry and the long edge opposite the seed curls slightly upwards.



Credit: Wikipedia.org (scott.zona) 2011 license CC-by-sa-2.0

Each one becomes airborne when released through a hole at the bottom of the gourd and sails through the air, majestically spiraling downward in 20 foot circles. The carefully designed aerodynamic features of the seed are such that it can glide great distances from its point of origin—a classic example of mechanical dispersal in the forest. Moving through the air like a butterfly in flight, it gains height, stalls, dips, and accelerates, once again producing lift—a maneuver known as phugoid oscillation. The seed’s stability in pitch and roll inspired the early aviation pioneer Igo Etrich. Scientists studying this amazing plant describe its lift-to-drag ratio and the rate of descent in these terms: “flight was so stable that samples were seen to take their optimal trimmed angle of attack with a value between the maximum gliding ratio and the minimum rate of descent.”

Evolutionists are confident in their conviction that their explanations for such marvels demonstrate nature’s independent, autonomous existence to the exclusion of God. They virtually “jump through hoops” and engage in “scientific ventriloquism”

in their quest to achieve legitimacy for their atheistic bent. However, when all relevant evidence eventually comes to light, it fits “hand in glove” with the presence of the God of the Bible.

## Wood<sup>20</sup>

Prior to the invention of modern plastics, what would the Creator have humans to use for suitable containers? Wood, stone, or clay, and eventually metal, pretty much exhausted the possibilities. Yet, government agencies, like the USDA and the FDA, generally have advocated the use of plastic for cutting boards and other surfaces that sustain food contact, on the grounds that the micropores and knife cuts in wood provide hidden havens for deadly bacterial organisms. As one Extension Specialist from the Department of Human Nutrition stated: “for cleanability and control of microorganisms, plastic is the better choice.”

However, the best research available on the subject suggests otherwise. Dr. Dean Cliver, microbiologist formerly with the Food Safety Laboratory and World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Food Virology at the University of California-Davis, disputed the oft-repeated claim regarding the superiority of plastic over wood. His research findings, conducted over a period of several years, consistently demonstrated the remarkable antibacterial properties of wood.

Dr. Cliver and his research associates tested five life-threatening bacteria (*Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*) on four plastic polymers and more than 10 species of hardwood, including hard maple, birch, beech, black cherry, basswood, butternut, and American black walnut. Within three minutes of inoculating wooden boards with cultures

of the food-poisoning agents, 99.9% of the bacteria were “unrecoverable.” On the other hand, none of the bacteria tested under similar conditions on plastic died. In fact, leaving microbe populations on the two surfaces overnight resulted in microbial growth on the plastic boards, while no live bacteria were recovered from wood the next morning. Interestingly, bacteria are absorbed into the wood, but evidently do not multiply, and rarely if ever thrive again. In contrast, bacteria in knife scars in plastic boards remain viable (even after a hot-water-and-soap wash) and maintain their ability to surface later and contaminate foods. Treating wood cutting boards with oils and other finishes to make them more impermeable actually retards wood’s bactericidal activity. Microbiologists remain mystified by their inability to isolate a mechanism or agent responsible for wood’s antibacterial properties. Incredible, divine design.

Do these research findings bear any resemblance to Mosaic injunctions 3,500 years ago which required the destruction of pottery that had become contaminated—while wood

was simply to be rinsed (Leviticus 6:28; 11:32-33; 15:12)? Dr. Cliver concluded: “I have no idea where the image of plastic’s superiority came from; but I have spent 40 years promoting food safety, and I would go with plastic if the science supported it. I don’t necessarily trust ‘nature,’ but I do trust laboratory research.” Kudos to Dr. Cliver’s honesty. What about trusting nature’s God?

## SUMMARY

**F**OUNDING Father Thomas Paine was among the small handful of Founders who rejected Christianity. Yet he was not an atheist. He believed that the created order proves God exists. In fact, he considered atheists to be “fools” for their rejection of the plain evidence of creation. In *Age of Reason*, he explained:

Deism, then, teaches us, without the possibility of being deceived, all that is necessary or proper to be known. The creation is the Bible of the Deist. He there reads, in the handwriting of the Creator himself, the certainty of his existence and the immutability of his power, and all other Bibles and Testaments are to him forgeries. The probability

## SPEAKING SCHEDULES

### Kyle Butt

February 5-6	Henderson, TN	(800) 348-3481
February 17-18	Athens, AL	(256) 278-0059

### Eric Lyons

February 8	Henderson, TN	(800) 348-3481
March 2-4	Dexter, MO	(573) 624-8906

### Dave Miller

February 11	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
March 9-11	Atlantic Beach, FL	(904) 246-2709

### Jeff Miller

February 4	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
March 16-18	North Charleston, SC	(843) 552-7733



that we may be called to account hereafter will, to a reflecting mind, have the influence of belief; for it is not our belief or disbelief that can make or unmake the fact. As this is the state we are in, and which it is proper we should be in, as free agents, it is the fool only, and not the philosopher, or even the prudent man, that would live as if there were no God.<sup>21</sup>

Don't be foolish. The evidence for the marvelous, creative handiwork of God is simply staggering. The only plausible, rational explanation for the existence of human beings on this planet is God. The intricacies of the created order attest to that living God.

[to be continued]

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Sites Under Review for Telescope that Could Detect Alien TV" (2006), *World Science*, July 10, [http://www.world-science.net/exclusives/060711\\_ska.htm](http://www.world-science.net/exclusives/060711_ska.htm).
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., emp. added.
- <sup>3</sup> One is reminded of NASA's Viking mission to Mars in the mid-seventies in which scientists eagerly declared evidence for life on Mars based on initial photos that appeared to show a "B" or even a face on a rock. Such judgments soon were deemed premature and incorrect. Cf. "Life' on Mars" (2006), [http://burro.astr.cwru.edu/stu/mars\\_life.html](http://burro.astr.cwru.edu/stu/mars_life.html). Also Thomas Warren and Antony Flew (1976), *The Warren-Flew Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press), pp. 112, 156.
- <sup>4</sup> Carl Sagan (1980), *Cosmos* (New York: Random House), p. 4.
- <sup>5</sup> Carl Sagan (1997), *Billions and Billions* (New York: Random House), p. 225.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 228.
- <sup>7</sup> Carl Sagan, ed. (1973), "Introduction," *Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence [CETI]* (MIT Press), pp. ix-x.
- <sup>8</sup> Carl Sagan (1985), *Contact* (New York: Simon and Schuster).
- <sup>9</sup> As cited in Ray Bohlin (1998), "Contact: A Eulogy to Carl Sagan," <http://www.probe.org/docs/contact.html>. Of course, the scientific evidence does not support this conclusion—see Ray Bohlin (2002), "Are We Alone in the Universe?" <http://www.probe.org/docs/lifemars.html>.

- <sup>10</sup> C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (1976 reprint), *Commentary on the Old Testament: The Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1:56; Herbert Leupold (1950 reprint), *Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 71.
- <sup>11</sup> See "StarChild Question of the Month for February 2000," High Energy Astrophysics Science Archive Research Center (HEASARC), Astrophysics Science Division (ASD) at NASA/GSFC, <https://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/questions/question18.html>: "[T]he Sun—in fact, our whole solar system—orbits around the center of the Milky Way Galaxy. We are moving at an average velocity of 828,000 km/hr. But even at that high rate, it still takes us about 230 million years to make one complete orbit around the Milky Way!"
- <sup>12</sup> As quoted in Norman Geisler (1983), *Cosmos: Carl Sagan's Religion for the*

*Scientific Mind* (Dallas, TX: Quest), p. 59.

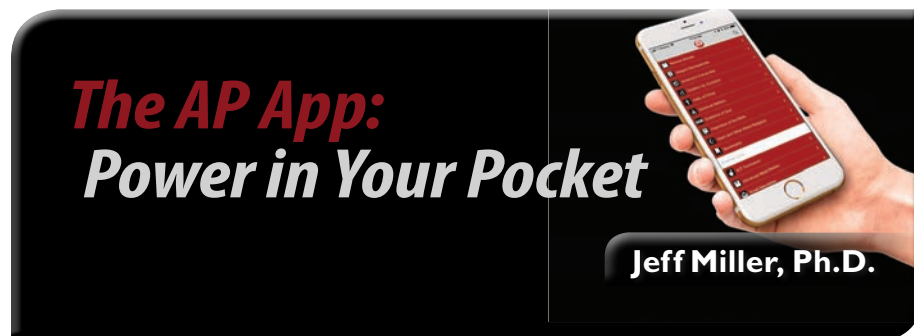
- <sup>13</sup> See Frank Gaebeline, ed. (1988), *The Expositor's Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 4:1037, 1042.

- <sup>14</sup> See Thomas Warren (1972), *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press). Also Dave Miller (2015), *Why People Suffer* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Kyle Butt (2010), *A Christian's Guide to Refuting Modern Atheism* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

- <sup>15</sup> Barclay Newman (1971), *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies), p. 180.

- <sup>16-20</sup> For full documentation of the details in these sections, see the on-line version of this article on the AP Web site.

- <sup>21</sup> Thomas Paine (1794), *Age of Reason*, Part II, Section 21, emp. added, <http://www.ushistory.org/paine/reason/singlehtml.htm>.



**R**AISE your hand if you have a lot of extra time to read and study up on apologetics materials. Not many of us can honestly do so, and yet God wants Christians to "always be ready to give a defense to anyone" (1 Peter 3:15), being "ready in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2). Thankfully, God has blessed us with technological tools that allow us to obey Him even while we are "on the run."

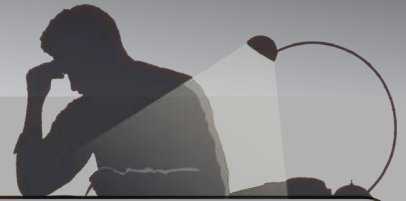
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## NOTE FROM *The Editor*



### New Book: *Does God Exist?*

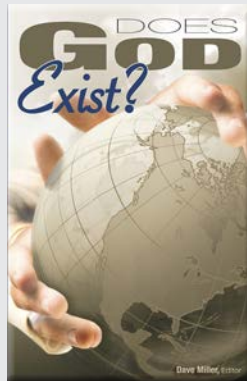
Christian apologists have long contended that the truth and validity of the Christian religion rests on three foundational pillars: the existence of God, the inspiration of the Bible, and the deity of Christ. Over a decade ago, AP undertook to create three volumes devoted to these three critical concepts.

The first volume, released in 2006 and titled *Behold! The Lamb of God*, offered a well-documented, positive case for the historicity, deity, and uniqueness of Jesus. The second volume, released a year later and titled *Behold! The Word of God*, provided proof for the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Now, some 10 years later, we are pleased to announce the release of the third and final volume in the “Behold!” series. We have given it the title *Does God Exist?* in order to enable the public to recognize the subject matter more easily. However, to mirror the previous two books, we have subtitled the volume “*Behold Your God!*” As the previous two volumes are

soon to be updated and reprinted, their current titles will become their subtitles and their main titles will become, respectively, *Is Jesus Divine?* and *Is the Bible God’s Word?*

This trilogy is a must-have for Christians. Not only should all Christians be able to point to specific proofs that authenticate their faith, they should pass that proof on to their children, grandchildren, friends, and neighbors. These books provide just such a capability. What’s more, those who do not accept the legitimacy of the basic doctrines of Christianity owe it to themselves at least to give a fair consideration to a portion of the vast evidence that demonstrates their authenticity. Why not consider giving one or more of these volumes to someone in your life?



**Dave Miller**

See Center Spread  
for More Details